**Introduction**

Parents, carers and other family members can and do make a real difference to children’s education. When parents and schools work together, children do better. Children learn a great deal at pre-school and school and you can add to that learning by supporting them at home. For example, showing an interest in their homework and talking to them about it really helps them to learn. With support and encouragement, children find it easier to get into the homework habit.

Homework helps your child to:

* learn how to organise and manage their time
* take more responsibility for their own learning practise and build on what they have learned at school
* develop confidence to deal with frustrations,
* overcome difficulties and solve problems
* learn and work independently in the future.

However…

"Homework should not be causing your child (or you!) stress or anxiety," The reality for many families is that homework is a flashpoint for tears, tantrums and arguments.

Homework traditionally has consisted of formal set writing tasks. We are living in an exciting period where much educational research on how we learn and best teaching practises is permeating throughout our schools, staffrooms and classrooms.

* Learning needs to be engaging
* Learning needs to pupil led
* Learning needs to be visible – clear learning intentions and success criteria.
* Learning needs to challenge

With this in mind we have reviewed our homework policy to reflect current research, we have listened to pupil, parental and teacher voice to create a homework policy that involves and informs parents of their child’s learning, supports classroom learning and engages children in giving the children personal choice and challenge all of which is highlighted as good practise in ‘Curriculum for Excellence’. We provide the child with opportunities to develop skills for learning life and work and develop as confident individuals, successful learners, responsible citizens and effective contributors.

**Reading**

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Homework tasks will focus on reading across the school and phonics in the early stages. There will be a strong focus on reading all through the school.

Confidence and ability in reading can be a source of great pleasure and personal satisfaction. It is also the heart of academic success, not just in English but in all subjects.

**Preview Learning (Talking Homework)**

At the heart of all our schools is our children. We want to provide the best possible learning experiences for our children. As adults before we participate in a course we explore the expectations and course learning. We would prepare ourselves for the course. It is the same for our children as they want to experience success.

Preview learning is where children are asked to think about a subject or discuss it at home before a lesson. Preview learning tasks will be issued on occasion by class teachers when it fits within the learning context in class.

**Benefits of Preview Learning**

* Reduces classroom anxiety as children can prepare
* Engages children in their learning through giving children ownership, personal choice and challenge
* Parents are informed and involved in their child’s learning
* Increases the relevance of the learning undertaken

**What does preview learning look like?**

Example

**Numeracy and Mathematics**: Next week we will revisit 2D shapes and introduce some new shapes the octagon, heptagon, rhombus, pentagon and hexagon. Can you find these new shapes below? Count the number of sides of each shape. Can you find these shapes at home and out and about? Share your learning with an adult? Ask an adult what they know about each of shapes?



Learning Intention: to recognise, name and describe key features of a pentagon, hexagon and octagon.

**Additional Homework Tasks**

P5 to 7 pupils may be asked to undertake a guided research task to further develop independent research skills.

Regularly children may be asked to prepare a class talk.

In January all classes will be given a Scottish poem to learn and recite in school as part of Scots celebrations.

Pupils may be asked to learn song words, assembly lines, etc to support activities in school.

Children will be asked to share their achievements outside of school to contribute to their learning journeys or learning profiles.

Reviewed: October 2019

**Appendix 1: Parental advice leaflets on how to support your child’s learning across the curriculum**

**Roles and Responsibilities**

**Pupils**

To ensure tasks are written down and taken home (With appropriate support)

To make time to complete reading/phonics and other tasks

To maintain high standards and high levels of effort when completing reading/phonics

To ensure your reading is done to a high standard and regularly

**Parents (see appendix)**

To ensure a suitable place, time for completing reading/phonics and any other tasks

To be actively involved and support with homework, and to engage in previewing the learning, talking about the learning, sharing your knowledge and experience.

To encourage and praise their child

**Teacher**

To expect high standards in their reading/phonics and other tasks

**Head/ Depute Head Teacher / School Management Team**

To check compliance with the policy

To meet and talk with parents when appropriate

To discuss with teachers how far the policy is being successfully implemented

To ensure all parents are aware of the policy and the responsibilities within it

**Appendix 1**

**Helping your child with reading**

Reading with your child is vital. Research shows that it's the single most important thing you can do to help your child's education. It's best to read little and often, so try to put aside some time for it every day.

Think of ways to make reading fun - you want your child to learn how pleasurable books can be. If you're both enjoying talking about the content of a particular page, linger over it for as long as you like.

Books aren't just about reading the words on the page, they can also present new ideas and topics for you and your child to discuss.

Tips for helping your child to enjoy books:

* Encourage your child to pretend to 'read' a book before he or she can read words.
* Visit the library as often as possible - take out CDs and DVDs as well as books.
* Schedule a regular time for reading - perhaps when you get home from school or just before bed.
* Buy dual-language books if English isn’t your family’s first language - you can talk about books and stories, and develop a love for them, in any language.
* Look for books on topics that you know your child is interested in - maybe dragons, insects, cookery or a certain sport.
* Make sure that children’s books are easily accessible in different rooms around your house.

**Helping your child with maths**

As with reading, try to make maths as much fun as possible - games, puzzles and jigsaws are a great way to start. It's also important to show how we use maths skills in our everyday lives and to involve your child in this.

Identifying problems and solving them can also help your child develop maths skills. If you see him or her puzzling over something, talk about the problem and try to work out the solution together.

Don't shy away from maths if you didn’t like it at school. Try to find new ways to enjoy the subject with your child.

Tips for helping your child to enjoy maths:

* Point out the different shapes to be found around your home.
* Take your child shopping and talk about the quantities of anything you buy.
* Let your child handle money and work out how much things cost.
* Look together for numbers on street signs and car registration plates.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/parents/primary_support/>

**Appendix 2**

*The definition of a parent, for the purposes of Education legislation is fairly broad, namely “a guardian and any person who is liable to maintain* ***or*** *has parental responsibilities (within the meaning of section 1(3) of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995) in relation to,* ***or*** *has care of a child or young person.”*

*Examples include:*

* *non-resident parents who are liable to maintain or have parental responsibilities in respect of a child*
* *carers who can be parents*
* *others with parental responsibilities, e.g. foster carers, relatives and friends who are caring for children and young people under supervision arrangements*
* *close relatives, such as siblings or grandparents caring for children who are not looked after or are under home supervision arrangements.*

*The use of the term ‘parent’ in this policy covers all the definitions detailed above.*

Reviewed: August 2022